IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) An image-forming apparatus with a hardware resource used for image formation, a program configured to perform processing related to the image formation, and a communication part, the image-forming apparatus comprising:

a format information acquisition part configured to acquire format information from an apparatus connected to the image-forming apparatus via the communication part, the format information including information on whether a format of image data is supportable as input by the connected apparatus ~~and information on a compression rate of the image data for a format conversion to be performed by the connected apparatus~~;

a format determination part configured to determine a transfer-time format of the image data to be transferred to the connected apparatus, based on the ~~acquired~~ format information that has been acquired and that includes the information on whether the format of the image data is supportable as input by the connected apparatus;

an image quality selection part configured to select a level of an image quality at which the image data is transferred to the connected apparatus, based upon capabilities of the connected apparatus; and

an image data conversion part configured to perform format conversion of the image data to be transferred to the connected apparatus in accordance with the determined transfer-time format of the image data and the level of the image quality that has been selected.

2. (Currently Amended) The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

an apparatus selection part configured to select one or more apparatuses from a plurality of apparatuses connected to the image-forming apparatus via the communication part.

3. (Previously Presented) The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein said apparatus selection part is configured to select the one or more connected apparatuses based on an input by an operator.

4. (Previously Presented) The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein said apparatus selection part is configured to select the one or more connected apparatuses based on information input to the image-forming apparatus.

5. (Previously Presented) The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said format information acquisition part is configured to acquire the format information by making a request to the connected apparatus for the format information.

6. (Currently Amended) The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said format information acquisition part is configured to acquire said format information, which includes at least one of: information indicating, format by format, whether a format of the image data is supportable as input and is supportable as output by the connected apparatus; information on whether the [[a]] format of the image data is convertible in the connected apparatus; information on compression of [[the]] a convertible format of the image data; and information as to whether the format of the image data is convertible by hardware in the connected apparatus.

7. (Currently Amended) The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said format information acquisition part is configured to store the acquired format information, which is based on a unit of the connected apparatus.

8. (Currently Amended) The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said format determination part is configured to determine [[a]] the format of the image data with a highest compression rate ~~from the acquired format information~~ as the transfer-time format, based on the information on whether the format of the image data is supportable as input by the connected apparatus ~~of the image data to be transferred to the connected apparatus~~.

9. (Previously Presented) The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said format information acquisition part is configured to acquire the format information from the connected apparatus at a time of activation of the image-forming apparatus.

10. (Currently Amended) The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 9, further comprising:

an evaluation part configured to evaluate the connected apparatus independently based on the ~~format~~ information on whether the format of the image data is supportable as input by the connected apparatus ~~acquired therefrom~~.

11. (Currently Amended) The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 10, wherein the evaluation part is configured to provide a result of [[an]] the evaluation, the result being ~~by said evaluation part is~~ displayable to an operator.

12. (Currently Amended) The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 10, ~~wherein the image-forming apparatus is~~ further comprising:

a display configured to display a result of the evaluation by said evaluation part.

13. (Currently Amended) The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 9, further comprising:

an evaluation part configured to evaluate each apparatus connected to the image-forming apparatus via the communication part independently based on the ~~format~~ information on whether the format of the image data is supportable as input by the respective apparatus connected to the image-forming apparatus ~~acquired therefrom~~.

14. (Currently Amended) The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said format determination part is configured to determine a reversible compression format ~~from the acquired format information~~ as the transfer-time format, based on the information on whether the format of the image data is supportable as input by ~~to be transferred to~~ the connected apparatus.

15. (Previously Presented) The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said format information acquisition part is configured to acquire the format information from the connected apparatus at a time of transferring the image data thereto.

16. (Currently Amended) The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 15, wherein said format information acquisition part is configured to acquire the format

information from the connected apparatus, based on an input indicating that ~~when an operator determines~~ the image data is to be transferred.

17. (Currently Amended) The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 15, ~~further comprising an~~ wherein said image quality selection part is further configured to determine whether to transfer the image data with a high image quality to the connected apparatus.

18. (Currently Amended) The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 17, wherein said format determination part is configured to determine a reversible compression format ~~from the acquired format information~~ as the transfer-time format, based on the information on whether the format of the image data is supportable as input by ~~of the image data to be transferred to~~ the connected apparatus, when said image quality selection part determines the image data is to be transferred with the high image quality to the connected apparatus.

19. (Canceled).

20. (Previously Presented) The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 15, wherein said format determination part is configured to determine whether to transfer the image data with a single format when the image data is to be transferred to a plurality of apparatuses connected to the image-forming apparatus via the communication part.

21. (Previously Presented) The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 20, wherein said format determination part is configured to transfer the image data to the

connected apparatuses with the image data remaining unconverted when the image data is prevented from being transferred to the connected apparatuses with the single format.

22. (Currently Amended) The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the ~~apparatus~~ communication part is configured to connect the image-forming apparatus to the ~~image-forming~~ connected apparatus through a network.

23. (Currently Amended) An image-forming apparatus with a hardware resource used for image formation, a program configured to perform processing related to the image formation, and a communication part, the image-forming apparatus comprising:

a format information generation part configured to generate format information ~~including~~ on a format of image data supportable as input by the image-forming apparatus ~~and information on a compression rate of the format of the image data for a format conversion to be performed by the image-forming apparatus~~;

a format information supply part configured to supply the generated format information to an apparatus connected to the image-forming apparatus via the communication part; and

an image data conversion part configured to convert [[the]] image data received from the connected apparatus in accordance with a format of the received image data, the format of the received image data being ~~wherein the connected apparatus is configured to determine the format of the received image data~~ based on the generated format information.

24. (Currently Amended) The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 23, wherein the format information generation part is configured to generate said format information, which includes at least one of: information indicating, format by format,

whether a format of image data is supportable as input and is supportable as output by the image-forming apparatus; information on whether the [[a]] format of the image data is convertible in the image-forming apparatus; information on compression of [[the]] a convertible format of the image data; and information as to whether the format of the image data is convertible by hardware in the image-forming apparatus.

25. (Currently Amended) The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 23, wherein the ~~apparatus~~ communication part is configured to connect [[to]] the image-forming apparatus to the connected apparatus through a network.

26. (Currently Amended) An image data transfer method of an image-forming apparatus with a hardware resource used for image formation, a program configured to perform processing related to the image formation, and a communication part, the image data transfer method comprising:

acquiring format information from an apparatus connected to the image-forming apparatus via the communication part, the format information including information on whether a format of image data is supportable as input by the connected apparatus ~~and information on a compression rate of the image data for a format conversion to be performed by the connected apparatus~~;

determining a transfer-time format of the image data to be transferred to the connected apparatus, based on the ~~acquired~~ format information that has been acquired and that includes the information on whether the format of the image data is supportable as input by the connected apparatus;

selecting a level of an image quality at which the image data is to be transferred to the connected apparatus, based upon capabilities of the connected apparatus; and

performing format conversion of the image data to be transferred to the connected apparatus in accordance with the determined transfer-time format of the image data and the level of the image quality that has been selected.

27. (Previously Presented) The image data transfer method as claimed in claim 26, wherein said acquiring acquires the format information from the connected apparatus at a time of activation of the image-forming apparatus.

28. (Previously Presented) The image data transfer method as claimed in claim 26, wherein said acquiring acquires the format information from the connected apparatus at a time of transferring the image data thereto.

29. (Currently Amended) The image data transfer method as claimed in claim 26, wherein, in the acquiring, the connected apparatus is configured to connect to the image-forming apparatus through a network.

30. (Currently Amended) A method of transferring image data between first and second image-forming apparatuses connected via a network, the method comprising:

generating format information, by the first image-forming apparatus, ~~including~~ on a format of the image data supportable as input by the first image-forming apparatus ~~and information on a compression rate of the format of the image data for a format conversion to be performed by the first image-forming apparatus~~;

acquiring the format information, by the second image-forming apparatus, from the first image-forming apparatus via the network;

determining, by the second image-forming apparatus, a transfer-time format of the image data to be transferred to the first image-forming apparatus via the network, based on the acquired format information;

selecting a level of an image quality, by the second image-forming apparatus, at which the image data is to be transferred to the first image-forming apparatus, based upon capabilities of the first image-forming apparatus; and

performing format conversion, by the second image-forming apparatus, of the image data to be transferred to the first image-forming apparatus via the network in accordance with the determined transfer-time format of the image data and the level of the image quality that has been selected.

31. (Currently Amended) The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the format determination part is configured to determine the transfer-time format, which is the ~~image~~ format of the image data with a highest compression rate that [[is]] either can be output by the connected apparatus or is convertible by the connected apparatus.

32. (Currently Amended) The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the format determination part is configured to determine the transfer-time format, which is the ~~image~~ format of the image data with a highest compression rate that [[is]] either can be output by the connected apparatus or is both convertible and printable by the connected apparatus.